



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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NOTE TO EDITORS AND REPORTERS: This news release contains information about both the 2011 junior class and 2011 graduating senior class ACT results. The two sets of data should not be directly compared.

ACT, Inc. does not provide district- or school-level results for the graduating senior class to KDE or CPE. The company does provide those results for the junior class, and those are available through KDE's Open House.

ACT RESULTS FOR JUNIORS AND GRADUATES SHOW IMPROVEMENT

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Overall results from the 2011 administration of the ACT to Kentucky's public school juniors and public school graduates show improvements in all subject areas and higher percentages of students ready for college-level coursework.

“ Kentucky has taken bold steps by measuring all students against the rigorous standards of college and career readiness,” said Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. “While this may have moved these measurements downward in the short-term, it is the right thing to do for our students and will pay great dividends over the long run. Our students have high goals, and we must offer them the preparation they need to be successful.”

“The ACT is an important tool that we use to determine college readiness and a student's ability to take credit-generating courses,” said Council on Postsecondary Education President Robert King. “These results are encouraging because we see important improvement in each of the tested areas. The more ready incoming students are, the higher the likelihood they will graduate from college.”

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RESULTS FROM THE 2011 ACT ADMINISTRATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL JUNIORS

Since 2008, as mandated by KRS 158.6453, all of Kentucky's public school juniors participate in the ACT, which assesses English, reading, mathematics and science and is scored on a scale of 1 to 36.

The cost of the exam is paid for by state funds. In spring 2011, 44,053 public school juniors took the ACT.

2010 AND 2011 ACT SUBJECT-AREA SCORES KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL JUNIORS

Group	ENGLISH		MATHEMATICS		READING		SCIENCE		COMPOSITE	
	'10	'11	'10	'11	'10	'11	'10	'11	'10	'11
All Students	17.8	18.0	18.3	18.5	18.9	19.0	18.7	19.0	18.5	18.8
African Am./Black	14.4	14.6	16.2	16.4	15.9	16.1	16.2	16.5	15.8	16.0
Am. Indian/Alaska Native	15.6	15.4	17.0	16.8	17.4	17.2	16.7	16.8	16.8	16.7
Caucasian Am./White	18.3	18.5	18.6	18.8	19.4	19.5	19.1	19.4	19.0	19.2
Hispanic	15.2	16.0	17.3	17.7	17.2	17.6	17.1	17.8	16.8	17.4
Asian	20.6	19.8	22.5	22.7	21.4	20.1	21.5	21.2	21.6	21.1
Hawaiian/Oth. Pacific Islander	n/a	17.8	n/a	18.3	n/a	19.0	n/a	18.8	n/a	18.6
Two or more races	n/a	18.5	n/a	18.5	n/a	19.4	n/a	19.3	18.4	19.1
Other/No Response	17.1	16.9	17.8	18.1	18.3	18.3	18.0	18.2	17.9	18.0
Males	17.0	17.3	18.4	18.7	18.5	18.5	18.7	19.0	18.3	18.5
Females	18.6	18.7	18.2	18.4	19.3	19.6	18.7	19.0	18.8	19.0
No Gender Response	14.9	14.6	16.2	16.8	16.7	16.4	16.3	16.3	16.2	16.1

ACT developed College Readiness Benchmarks in English, mathematics, science and reading, with research indicating that students who reach those have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course. The benchmark scores are:

- 18 or higher on the ACT English Test
- 22 or higher on the ACT Mathematics Test
- 21 or higher on the ACT Reading Test
- 24 or higher on the ACT Science Test

For the Kentucky public school juniors who took the ACT assessment in 2011, most of the percentages of students ready for college-level courses increased.

PERCENTAGES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL JUNIORS READY FOR COLLEGE-LEVEL WORK

COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSE	2008	2009	2010	2011
English Composition	46%	46%	49%	50%
Algebra	20%	21%	22%	24%
Social Science	33%	30%	35%	35%
Biology	15%	16%	15%	16%
All Four	10%	11%	11%	11%

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KRS 158.6453 mandates that Kentucky's public school students participate in the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) from ACT. The state assesses public school 8th graders using the EXPLORE test, public school 10th graders with the PLAN test and public school 11th graders through the ACT.

Senate Bill 1, passed in the 2009 session of the Kentucky General Assembly and codified in KRS 158.6453, mandates that ACT results be included in school and district accountability results in the 2011-12 school year.

RESULTS FROM THE 2011 ACT ADMINISTRATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATING SENIORS

The 2011 composite ACT score for Kentucky public school graduating seniors is 19.2, compared to 2010's composite of 19.0. Nationally, the 2011 composite score is 21.1, and the composite for 2010 was 21.0. The national composite score includes both public and non-public school test-takers.

2011 KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATING SENIORS – OVERALL ACT RESULTS

	2010	2011
Kentucky Public School Students Tested	41,277	42,196
English Average Score	18.3	18.7
Mathematics Average Score	18.8	18.8
Reading Average Score	19.2	19.6
Science Average Score	19.2	19.3
Composite	19.0	19.2

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PERCENTAGES OF KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES MEETING ACT BENCHMARKS

	2008	2009	2010	2011
English	66%	52%	52%	55%
Mathematics	33%	24%	25%	26%
Reading	51%	39%	37%	40%
Science	24%	18%	19%	19%
All Four	18%	13%	14%	14%

Some of the low percentages of Kentucky public school students meeting the benchmarks can be attributed to the larger population of students who took the ACT and to some students' status as 11th graders who have not yet completed all of the credits necessary for graduation.

The number of public high school graduates taking the ACT increased slightly, from 41,277 in 2010 to 42,196 in 2011. To compile information for the release of 2011 graduating class data, ACT, Inc. used students' scores from the last time they took the test. Since the ACT is administered to all Kentucky public high school juniors, some of those students may not have taken the ACT again as 12th graders.

The overall ACT Assessment consists of tests in four areas: English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. ACT, Inc. recommends that college-bound students take four or more years of English; three or more years of mathematics (including Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and geometry); three or more years of social studies; and three or more years of natural sciences. ACT, Inc. defines specific courses in these areas. Kentucky's graduation requirements define four credits in English; three in mathematics; three in social studies; three in science; one in history and appreciation of visual and performing arts; and one-half each in health and physical education.

Many Kentucky colleges and universities use ACT scores to inform admissions decisions and to place students in appropriate college courses. ACT scores also are used, along with high school grade point averages, to determine the amount of money high school graduates are eligible to receive through the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship program.

In comparing Kentucky with the nation, the widest gaps in performance among students were in overall mathematics scores (2.3 points), and the smallest was in science (1.6 points).

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Kentucky's African-American public school students' average composite score was 0.6 points lower than the national average for African-American students. Composite scores for non-white public school students increased for most groups, but gaps between the performance of ethnic minority and white students persisted.

**AVERAGE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES' ACT COMPOSITE SCORES BY ETHNICITY
2010 & 2011**

	2010		2011	
	#	Score	#	Score
African American	3,896	16.4	3,989	16.4
American Indian	167	16.7	173	17.1
White	32,293	19.4	32,956	19.7
Hispanic	846	17.6	1,093	17.8
Asian	497	22.5	457	22.3
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	n/a	14	19.8
Two or more races	765	18.8	907	19.1
Other/No Response	2,813	17.8	2,607	17.8

The composite score gaps between public school males and females of all ethnic groups in Kentucky were minimal in most subjects, with males posting a composite score of 19.1 and females a score of 19.4. On ACT, which offers only multiple-choice questions, males tend to outscore females in mathematics and science, and females tend to outscore males in English and reading.

Kentucky is one of only a few states that has implemented the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) from ACT, Inc. and, through 2006's Senate Bill 130, administers the ACT to all public school juniors. The state assesses public school 8th graders using the EXPLORE test and assesses public school 10th graders with the PLAN test through EPAS.

Although ACT is one component of the college and career readiness measurements that schools and districts will be held accountable for, today's data cannot be used to calculate those measurements for a number of reasons:

- The Grade 11 ACT Reports contain juniors' data, and the college/career-ready rate (CCRR) will be based on 2011 seniors' data.
- The CCRR takes into account all the administrations of the ACT.
- The best score in each domain from all administrations will be used in the CCRR calculation.
- Graduating senior data include only the last ACT administration, which may not represent the best score.

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